

Waiololoa, The Wonder of Hawaii.

In the olden time, before prosy science had robbed the myth of its poetry and fable of its charm, when the sylvan dell was the habitat and the oracle the voice of divinity, when mystic characters concealed priestly lore and shepherd kings read their destiny in the stars prophesying of coming joys, golden times, and happy days of peace, when barbaric hospitality made captive the wandering paladin, and the allurements of beauty made him the pliant thrall of love, then the renewal of youth was requisite to exhaust the slowly recurring events of life to enable the adventurer to visit the limits of the then known world. The thunder cloud was then the fortress of the gods, and the dolphin of the deep the volunteer life-boat that rescued luckless victims of piracy and shipwreck from untimely death. Jason, who wasted his life in recovering the golden fleece, was given back his youth by the enchantress Medea. Youth has ever been attractive, and, when united with beauty irresistible. The gods looked upon the daughters of men and saw that they were fair, and even Jove was tempted and truant to Hera, and in the guise of a cygnet to prove the power of love wooed Leda, from a god to a goose "*facile descensus*." There is no instance of time in its flight turning back to make woman a girl again. She breaks so many hearts when guileless that the wisdom of the serpent's concrete experience is never united with the innocence of the dove; but man could by meritorious deeds propitiate the gods and be renewed and live again to love and be again undone. In Palestine, the Pool of Bethesda when touched by an angel was endowed with miraculous juvenescence potency, and severely tested the patience of the devout and faithful. One ancient believer said that he waited and watched thirty-eight years but someone more agile always anticipated his plunge and received the boon of youth and health with which the water was endowed by the heavenly visitant in his "like angel's visits few and far between."

The fountain in which Salamis bathed not only eliminated all defects and reflected from its crystal surface perfect beauty, but at the command of the invisible presiding genii changed the sex of truant and aberrant mortals.

We are not informed by tradition of the dimensions of the pool or whether it was whilom a place of great resort, but what a spot of concourse it would now be.

In that age woman was happy, the chains which she wore were golden. She revered her lord and never aspired to rivalry in the Olympic games in the forum or in war. There must be something nobler in the manhood which achieved heroic triumphs than that developed by the stock exchange and the worship of mammon, or else the enfranchisement and progressive advancement of the beau sexe has been productive of discontent and almost universal desire "to wear the kirtle and have a swashing and martial outside as many mannish cowards have."

And now the shores of Lake Superior would not suffice for the thronging multitude that would abandon skirts and even throw away the beloved big sleeves to secure the desideratum of sexual change, to grow beard and be endowed with other outward and visible signs of manhood.

Our credulity is taxed to the utmost by the numerous recitals in ancient history of transformations from old age to youth by magic, by metaphysical aid and junivrescent fountains. Yet mystery has ever had its charm in one way or another for every grade of barbarism to civilization. The world does not disclose all of its secrets at once. Science unravels mysteries slowly and the pages of nature like the Sybiline books, can only be interpreted by the magi, the mysteries of far off lands be learned from those whose wanderings have brought them in contact with the occult physical forces of nature. Without truth there can be no fiction, without foundation there can be no superstructure. "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

In the remote Hawaiian Islands, in the shadow of Mauna Loa, the great volcanic phenomenon of the world, in a secluded vale, shaded by palms and ohia forests, latticed by the tropical parasites that climb to the tops of the stately trees, is Waiololoa, the fountain of perpetual youth. The native Hawaiians are imaginative and superstitious, and they have many legends of the gods who fire the volcanos bathing in the boiling sulphurous lakes and pools that abound in the region adjacent, to remove the begrimed livery of their calling.

The pool of Waiololoa is five hundred feet long and has a breadth of one hundred and fifty feet. The surface of the pool rises and falls about four feet twice every day. There is a popular error prevailing in the surrounding country that this is caused by the ocean tides, but this mistake is apparent, for the pool is six hundred feet above the sea level. The variation in depth is doubtless caused by a natural syphon in a precipitous rock that bounds one side of the pool and it is thus kept supplied with clear pure water by natural but invisible means, mysterious but inscrutable to the native Hawaiian. They have many fanciful legends of supernatural agencies, believing that the presiding dieties abhor old age and are patrons of youth, and have the power of retrogressive transformation. May the illusion, if one it is, never be dispelled and may old age, if only in imagination, wash off its disfigurements and assume the bloom of early life, "*esto perpetua*." So realistic are their stories that as I followed the winding path in approaching Waiololoa, now passing around an abrupt precipice, now through a tangled jungle, my mind was in constant expectancy of startling surprises. I almost hoped that the tutelary deities would favor me, a stranger from so distant a land, with at least a furtive glance of their forms before they disappeared and that which legend and song described so poetically as corporeal, vanish into thin air. But my hopes and excited imagination availed me nothing save buoyant spirits and a lively enjoyment of the surroundings. At last, under a grove of lofty cocoa palms lifting from a bank covered with short green grass, I stood looking into the clearest, the most beautiful sheet of water I had ever seen. A sugar-cane lying at the bottom thirty-five feet deep assumed to the eye an exaggerated size, every joint was distinctly visible, while smaller objects, the finest corn thrown as an offering to the goddess Pele could be seen apparently enlarged.

On the opposite side of the water, an immense rock rises almost perpendicular many hundred feet, and here and there is relieved from austerity by festooned vines and shrubs that grow from the fissures cleft by quakes that the earth suffers when Pele, the great goddess, wakes in anger at the disobedience and wantonness of her children of the Hawaiian race. I was lost in contemplation of the beautiful scene, the products of nature unassisted, or should I say, undisfigured by art. It is truly a fit habitation for divinity. I did not feel old, but I wanted to feel young and sportive, so I disrobed for a bath, and my guide placed my clothes under the shelter of a projecting rock at a little distance and retired. I approached the water by natural stone steps and immersed my hand, and so exact was the temperature with the cool air that sight alone convinced me that my hand was in the water. Like Manfred, I felt "the impulse," but I did not plunge into the pool ever sacred to Pele in Hawaiian myths, and I fancied that I could hear indistinctly a low but musical saraband for which I felt a strange reverence. Was I mistaken? the sequel will tell.

There was no habitation visible and no impress of man's hand to mar the scene, no remains of felled timber, not even the pruning of a single bough. I was in solitude in Paradise as I thought, and dreamed not of the barbaric hospitality that awaited me on my exit from the bath. I sported in the water for a long time, I dived, floated and swam to the opposite shore or rock bound bank, I climbed up to a projecting ledge and jumped feet foremost into the pool. I went down, down, but

did not touch bottom. I ascended the the stone stairs and under a young cocoa palm where I had disrobed was a large sheet of tapa, a native cloth, as white as snow, spread upon the verdant grass, I was prepared for my adventure and accepted the proffered luxury as one accustomed to magic and enchantments. Wrapping myself in a large Turkish towel with which I had come provided, I reclined upon the tapa throwing one part of its capacious proportions over my nether extremities and for a few moments I was left to reflection. To say that I enjoyed the bath would be as inadequate in description as it would be to paint a rose, the queen of flowers, with one color without tints. I was dreaming, almost in a trance. A trance is nothing more than immotional expectancy, a border line between the visible and invisible, when I heard a sweet, low voice pronounce the sound "*Aloha nui*," which in Hawaiian means, I love you, the usual salutation more than equivalent to *bon jour* or good morrow. I uncovered my face and on either side of me was standing with easy grace a pretty young native girl just budding into womanhood, with all the good nature and humor that usually beams from a female Hawaiian face. I knew from the mischievous eyes that I was to be the victim of an embarrassing situation and about to take my first lesson in the "*lume lume*," a native cure for every evil and ill that flesh is heir to, and I yielded without even a mental protest. The girls swayed a few movements in the hula hula, a native dance guided by the notes of a song, wild, yet melodious in the extreme. I felt their long delicate fingers separating as it were the sinuous tissues of my ankles, the manipulators moving rapidly from one locality to another with a searching gentleness of pressure at times so forcible as to verge on veritable pain, and then so soothing as to make one's thankfulness vocal. There are no words of thanks in the Hawaiian language, the only words analogous in meaning being *makai* and *nui nui*, which are used interchangeably, meaning good, strong, great. How long I indulged in this delirium I do not know. Time has no measure for such kingly pleasures. These hours were dressed in the Hawaiian frock called *holikoo*—a loose wrapper much after the pattern of a fashionable lady's *robe de nuit*. Their feet were unconfined by shoes, or even sandals, and their toes were almost as long and flexible as their fingers. These children of Nature had never known a care, and were ignorant of want. The kanakas are ever kind to their children; I have never heard one cry. The service being performed, they tripped away as they had come, and my guide returned bringing my clothes and, hastily dressing, I started for Mr. Shipman's ranch, where I was being entertained during my visit to Puna. I felt as if an important epoch in my life had been reached, and that I had turned back on the road of life and was approaching by blooming paths the spring tide of existence once again—that old ways were abandoned and I felt happy, for I fully believe that "the days of youth are the days of our glory." At the ranch I found dinner waiting for me simple, yet of peculiar excellence and neatly served olypees, a shell-fish *au naturel* pond mullet—the finest fish in the world—and tender loin of beef braized with sweet potatoes, such as are only grown on the Sandwich Islands, a bottle of California claret and a cup of *cafe noir* of native growth—an improvement on mocha itself. When I returned to the verandah the stars were shining brightly and a young moon was tending towards the western horizon, while a breeze from the ocean of a temperature of about 70 degrees gave motion to the feathery fronds of various palms, infusing just life enough to fill the imagination with strange images of the past and visions of the future. What were those thoughts? It would be profanity to translate them into words; the pure in mind have had kindred thoughts, and no sound, no language can make them vocal.

My visit was extended from day to day without any reasonable excuse except that, with repetitions of the bath, youth, with all of its alluring pleas-